AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-8. **(Canceled)**

9. **(Previously presented)** A piezoelectric actuator, comprising

a multi-layered construction of piezoelectric layers (2) interleaved with inner electrodes (3, 4; 14, 15), and

an alternating contacting of the inner electrodes (3, 4; 14, 15) with outer electrodes (5, 6; 11), the regions between the outer electrodes (5, 6; 11) being provided with an insulation layer (12, 13), comprised of the same ceramic material as the piezoelectric layers (2), and thus having the same properties as the piezoelectric layers (2) themselves, and the insulating layer (12, 13) being applied to the outer surface of the piezoelectric actuator (1; 10) in the green state of the piezoelectric actuator (1, 10), before sintering.

10. **(Previously presented)** The piezoelectric actuator according to claim 9, wherein the insulating layer (12, 13) encloses the edges of the piezoelectric actuator (1; 10).

Claims 11-12. **(Canceled)**

13. **(Previously presented)** The piezoelectric actuator according to claim 9, wherein the outer electrodes (5, 6; 11) are attached to regions of the insulating material that have been uncovered by grinding.

14. **(Previously presented)** The piezoelectric actuator according to claim 10, wherein the outer electrodes (5, 6; 11) are attached to regions of the insulating material that have been uncovered by grinding.

Claims 15-28. **(Canceled)**

29. **(Previously presented)** An apparatus made by the following steps,

providing a piezoelectric stack having alternating layers of piezoelectric material and inner electrodes, and

prior to any sintering of the stack, coating the outside of the piezoelectric stack with a layer of material which is the same material as the piezoelectric layers.

30. **(Previously presented)** An apparatus as recited in claim 29, wherein the steps also include,

after the piezoelectric stack is coated with the same material as is used as the piezoelectric material, sintering the apparatus so that the material used as the coating becomes hard, smooth and impervious, and forms an insulation layer for the piezoelectric stack.

31. **(Previously presented)** An apparatus as recited in claim 30, wherein the steps also include,

after the piezoelectric stack is sintered and the coating layer is hardened, removing portions of the sintered coating.

32. **(Previously presented)** An apparatus as recited in claim 31, wherein the steps also include,

after portions of the sintered coating have been removed, adding outer electrodes to the area which has had the coating removed in a manner such that the outer electrodes make appropriate contact with the inner electrodes.